

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 02207 262013 Z

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADP-00 COA-02 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 ACDA-19 CG-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 FMC-04

IO-12 RSR-01 /127 W

----- 041433

R 261926 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7256

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 2207

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, EFIS, EC, US

SUBJECT: ECUADOREAN POSITION ON FREE PASSAGE BEYOND 12 MILES
WITHIN ITS CLAIMED 200 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA

SUMMARY: THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION
AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ARE TRYING TO SELL WITHIN THE GOE FREE
PASSAGE BEYOND 12 MILES WITHIN THE ECUADOREAN- CLAIMED 200 MILE
TERRITORIAL SEA BECAUSE A MORE RESTRICTIVE POSITION WILL
BE UNTENABLE IN THE LONG RUN. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED GOE LOS POSITION WITH AMBASSADOR RODRIGO
VALDEZ,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION, ON APRIL 25, 1973.
HE IS AN ECUADOREAN DIPLOMAT ASSIGNED TO THE COMMISSION. HE IS A
WELL INFORMED AND RELIABLE SOURCE, FORMERLY SUB- SECRETARY OF THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY.

2. AMBASSADOR VALDEZ STATED THAT HE PERSONALLY FAVORED FREE
PASSAGE
BEYOND 12 MILES WITHIN ECUADOR' S 200 MILE CLAIMED TERRITORIAL SEA.
HE SAID THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS TO HIM THAT A MORE RESTRICTIVE POSITION
WAS UNTENABLE IN THE LONG RUN AND THAT MANY OTHER FOREIGN
MINISTRY OFFICIALS AGREED WITH HIM. HE ASLO SAID THAT THERE WAS
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PAGE 02 QUITO 02207 262013 Z

A DECREE AWAITING PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ' SIGNATURE WHICH WOULD MAKE THIS POSITION THE POLICY OF ECUADOR. AMBASSADOR VALDEZ ADDED THAT THIS DECREE HAD BEEN PENDING FOR OVER A YEAR AND THAT THE ECUADOREAN NAVY WAS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO IT AND HAD DELAYED ITS APPROVAL. HE REPORTED THAT THIS OPPOSITION CONTINUED.

3. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY HAS PREVIOUSLY COMMENTED ON OFFICIAL GOE LOS STATEMENTS WHICH ASSERT THAT ITS CLAIMED TERRITORIAL SEA

QEHEN# TO " INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS" (QUITO 794) AND THE ABSENCE OF SUCH STATEMENTS IN PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES (QUITO 1471). WE HAVE OBSERVED THAT THIS DIFFERENCE PROBABLY REFLECTED POLICY DIFFERENCES IN THE GOE AND THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT YET READY TO ESPOUSE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY POSITION (QUITO 1471). AMBASSADOR VALDEZ' REMARKS TEND TO SUPPORT THIS VIEW. WE BELIEVE THAT AMBASSADOR VALDEZ' PERCEPTION OF THE NEED TO GRANT FREE PASSAGE WITHIN THE 200 MILE ZONE IS SHARED BY HIGH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. SINCE SUCH A POSITION COULD BE PORTRAYED AS A SACRIFICE OF SOVEREIGNTY, WE ARE NOT AT ALL SURE THAT IT WILL PREVAIL IN THE END.
BURNS

NOTE BY OCT: # AS RECEIVED, WILL SERVICE UPON REQUEST.

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